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**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and
the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

**Identical letters dated 23 February 2010 from the Permanent
Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council**

I wish to draw your attention to the most recent disturbing and provocative action by Israel, the occupying Power, in defiance of its obligations under international law, international humanitarian law and relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. In a clear and explicit declaration to continue with its confiscation of Palestinian land, entrench its occupation and create further obstacles for the resumption of the peace process, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced yesterday, 22 February 2010, that it was adding religious sites of historical and religious significance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to its so-called list of national heritage sites, the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Al-Khalil (Hebron) and the site of Bilal's Mosque in Bethlehem (Rachel's Tomb) along with the Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem.

The Palestinian side condemns such destructive and provocative statements and actions by Israel, the occupying Power, which are not only illegal but will surely inflame tensions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, at a time when the international community is exerting maximum efforts to build trust between the two parties in order to relaunch the peace process. In addition, the above illegal policies and practices serve only to embolden and encourage the aggression, provocations and acts of terror that continue to be perpetrated by Israeli settlers throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory against the civilian population and their properties as well as against historical and religious sites.

Given the extremely important religious and spiritual nature of the issue and the importance of these sites to Muslims and Christians worldwide, we call on the relevant United Nations bodies, in particular the Security Council, to shoulder its responsibilities and take the necessary steps to address this issue and to have the above-mentioned illegal Israeli action against Palestinian archaeological and cultural sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

reversed immediately. Unfortunately, the international community has fallen short of taking any effective action to stop such illegal actions of successive Israeli governments in the past, which has allowed for such violations to continue and if they remain unaddressed, the consequences at the political and security levels will surely be grave. Not only do such actions have the high potential to incite violence between the two sides as mentioned above, but, as we have repeatedly cautioned, such actions further threaten the prospects for achieving the two-State solution for peace.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 356 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 9 February 2010 (A/ES-10/476-S/2010/80) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Riyad Mansour**
Ambassador, Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations